

**MAPLE GROVE TRANSIT COMMISSION**  
**City of Maple Grove**  
**Meeting of March 22, 2011**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Curt Herwers, Rose Peterson, Jodi Carman Kortsha, Ronda Zegar, Terry Coss and Michelle Driessen

**Members Absent:** Laura Ayala

**Also Present:** Mike Opatz – City of Maple Grove, Bill Patten – Midwest Paratransit, Bruce Bakke and Doyne Parsons – Metro Transit.

**Call to Order**

Transit Commission Chair Rose Peterson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Transit Award Presentations**

On behalf of the Transit Commission, Mike Opatz and Rose Peterson presented the drivers listed below a 2011 Maple Grove Transit “Distinguished Service Award”. The transit commission congratulated and expressed their gratitude to these drivers for the excellent service they provide. Chair Peterson read segments of the actual nominations received from the riders.

- Lillie Loving, Metro Transit
- Michael Gulickson, Metro Transit
- Edward Page, Metro Transit
- Jon Bendix, Metro Transit
- Teresa Bolduc, Metro Transit
- Bonny Thomason, Metro Transit
- Richard Knight, Metro Transit

**Approve Minutes**

The Commission approved the meeting minutes of amended minutes if January 25, 2011. Chair Rose Peterson stated that the minutes should be amended as shown below from Page 2 under Miscellaneous Updates:

- Opatz noted that the Office of Legislative Auditor’s report on transit governance is complete. A summary of the report was distributed. Page 74 of the report recommends that Maple Grove and Plymouth consolidate transit operations. Opatz stated that the City Council and the Transit Commission had no interest in consolidating with Plymouth when they had inquired in the past and he will keep the Commission updated if that position changes.

## Discussion of Routes and Statistics

Opatz reviewed the monthly ridership summaries for November and December 2010, plus the most recent daily ridership reports for December 2010 and January 2011. Opatz stated that year-end ridership was 751,822, which is a 1/2 percent drop from 2009.

The Commissioners gave updates regarding their commute and routes:

- Rose Peterson – Still have an occasional driver who does not announce the route and next stop information before leaving Minneapolis in the p.m.
- Curt Herwers – How many people are enrolled in the *Rides to Awards* program and how many vendors are involved for redemption coupons? What can the Metro Transit and Maple Grove Transit Commission do to build both subscriptions by riders and coupon options from vendors?
- Michelle Driessen – No issues and all is good.
- Jodi Carman Kortsha – The 788 shuttle bus was involved in a minor accident that frazzled the driver due to the extreme reaction by the other motorist involved. Crosswinds ridership seems to be growing.
- Terry Coss – The boarding of coach buses due to narrow steps and aisle can cause some issues, but the ride is so nice it outweighs those negatives. Route 783 substitute drivers do not get the information or forget to use the HOV entrance from Weaver Lake Road to east bound I-94. Some bus drivers block the intersections in Minneapolis making the congestion worse. Snow melt dripping off bus shelters causes re-freeze issues on the sidewalks on Marquette between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Ronda Zegar – Route 781A trip # 9 was five minutes late yesterday. The NexTrip sign was off by 2 hours on 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Laura Ayala – absent

## Parkway Station Construction Update

Opatz gave an update on the new Parkway Transit Station as it relates to the construction progress. The parking lot did open on December 6, 2010 for Route 785 service and about 230 commuters on average have been parking there. The station opened on Monday February 14, 2011. The construction contractor does have a list of correction items to take care of as well as some fine tuning of the energy management system. Landscaping and some other parking lot concrete items will be taken care of this spring. A grand opening may happen sometime this summer and a survey conducted this fall to determine if the riders are new riders or shifted from an existing route.

## **Update on the Route 788 Restructuring**

Opatz stated that for a week in October 2010, Maple Grove Transit recorded ridership boardings for the Route 788. No trip had had ridership exceeding six riders. These results are consistent with a similar study done in 2005. The results show a low performing route in terms of ridership especially in the area east of 494 where no riders were recorded. The segment along Bass Lake Road from West Fish Lake Road to I-494 was sparse. The segment along West Fish Lake Road slightly outperformed the previously mentioned segment. As result of the low ridership, Maple Grove Transit examined options to restructure the Route 788 to potentially include the following:

- A restructured Route 788 that begins in southwest area of Maple Grove while retaining the most productive part of the Route 788, which is the route segment on West Fish Lake Road between Bass Lake Road and Weaver Lake Road. Over the past two years, the most requested area for new service came from the southwest corner of Maple Grove in the area south of Bass Lake Road and Lawndale.
- Develop a new shuttle route along Bass Lake Road from Nottingham Parkway to Sycamore Lane then to Shepherd of the Grove park-and-ride on the Route 780.

Three different surveys were conducted to solicit feedback and to evaluate these options:

- Survey of the current riders of the Route 788.
- Survey of the current users of the Crosswinds Park-and-Ride.
- Survey of the residents of the southwest corner of Maple Grove in the area south of Bass Lake Road and Lawndale.

Results of these surveys led the Maple Grove Transit to recommend to the Maple Grove City Council that a restructure route be implemented September 10, 2011 as depicted in the route map that was distributed to the Commissioners. This recommendation does eliminate the current Route 788 segments east of West Fish Lake Road along Bass Lake Road and adds new service to the southwestern corner of Maple Grove.

It should be noted, there was a good deal of interest in this proposed route recommendation by the residents of the southwest corner of Maple Grove. However, a fair portion of residents were quite clear they were not in favor of a bus operating on Fieldstone Boulevard, so that route segment was dropped from the final proposal.

A motion was made and passed by the Transit Commission to recommend this proposal to the City Council, but Commissioner Jodi Carman Kortsha abstained. This matter will be on the agenda of the Maple Grove City Council meeting of April 18, 2011 for final approval and implementation.

## **Bus Types for 2012 Fleet Order**

Opatz said that in 2012 Maple Grove Transit will have 12 more of the 40-foot /45-passenger Gillig buses to replace. Seven similar buses were recently replaced with 55-passenger coach style buses. The Metropolitan Council has giving the City the option to vary the type of bus that is purchased as long as the total purchase amount is similar to what it would be for 12 coach buses. As mentioned in the past, the 40-foot /45-passenger Gillig buses are no longer being manufactured as they are what is called a high-floor transit bus. To best match our ridership needs and budget, it is proposed that Maple Grove purchase:

- six 55-passenger coach buses,
- three 62-passenger articulated buses
- three 38-passenger low-floor buses.

An analysis by the Met Council found that the above bus order mix would be close to cost neutral that they would approve of this bus order.

The above order would bring the total fleet of 38-passenger low-floor buses to eight, which is a good fit for the nine round trips on Route 780 and 782 trips that have average daily ridership below 38. See attachment. These two routes serve established areas in Maple Grove where substantial new ridership is not expected and where ridership rates have been historical stable. Furthermore, using low-floor buses will help meet the subsidy per passenger performance measures set by the Met Council do to their lower operating costs per hour. Below is the current operating rates per hour for these three buses:

- articulated buses - \$188.63
- coach buses - \$175.25
- low-floor buses - \$170.79

An additional three articulated buses will also help with the long term projected ridership growth associated with the Parkway Station. The buses would be paid through the capital bus replacement account at the Met Council. A motion was made and passed to proceed with the 2012 bus fleet order with six 55-passenger coach buses, three 62-passenger articulated buses, and three 38-passenger low-floor buses.

## **Transit Policies Manual**

Opatz stated that the purpose of the Maple Grove Transit Policy Manual is to adopt a set of policies that provide a general framework how the City of Maple Grove will govern its transit operations. More specifically, the adoption of the Policy Manual is directed toward ensuring compliance with all applicable federal regulations as condition to receiving federal funds for vehicles and facilities. The Policy Manual provides the mechanism to satisfactorily demonstrate that its contracted bus service providers are also in compliance with applicable federal regulations and that the City is adequately monitoring that compliance. The Policy Manual sets the procedures to satisfactorily demonstrate that the City of Maple Grove is providing adequate monitoring, oversight and control over its federally funded facilities and vehicles.

The end result of implementing the Policy Manual is an environment to help ensure that Maple Grove Transit services and facilities are operated in safe, reliable, and cost-effective manner and made available to the general public regardless of race, color, national origin or disability. The Policy Manual includes the following chapters:

- Chapter 1 - Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Chapter 2 - Drug and Alcohol
- Chapter 3 - Title VI of Civil Rights
- Chapter 4 - Maintenance
- Chapter 5 - Lobbying
- Chapter 6 - Suspension and Debarment
- Chapter 7 - Buy American
- Chapter 8 - Procurement
- Chapter 9 - Safety and Security
- Chapter 10 - Satisfactory Continuing Control

The above chapters may be amended or added to from time to time as the situation dictates or as federal policies change. The Policy Manual was approved by the Maple Grove City Council on March 21, 2011.

**Adjourn / Next Meeting**

- Next Scheduled Regular Meeting: May 24, 2011
- Being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.
- Minutes submitted by Mike Opatz, Transit Administrator.